Proposed Claim Amendments:

Please amend the claims as follows:

14. (Currently Amended) A wafer boat for holding a semiconductor wafer during wafer processing at elevated temperatures, the wafer boat comprising:

a first end and a second end;

a plurality of slots positioned between the first and the second ends for receiving semiconductor wafers therein, each of the plurality of slots comprising first and second upper support guides to maintain the semiconductor wafers in a vertical orientation; and

a lower portion upon which a portion of the wafer ~~is~~ will be in contact, and which ~~supports~~ will support the wafer when the wafer is positioned thereon, the wafer boat having an inner radius originating from a centerpoint, the slots extending generally along an arc having a radius of curvature corresponding to the inner radius, wherein the lower portion ~~having~~ has a generally arcuate and concave contour as viewed from the centerpoint~~along a central axis of the wafer and an arcuate configuration which~~, and wherein at semiconductor processing temperatures of between approximately 1000 °C to 1400° C, the lower portion substantially conforms to the portion of the wafer supported thereon.

15. (Previously Presented) The wafer boat of claim 14, where the wafer boat comprises silicon carbide.

16. (Previously Presented) The wafer boat of claim 15, wherein the silicon carbide is recrystallized silicon carbide.

17. (Previously Presented) The wafer boat of claim 14, configured to hold at least one semiconductor wafer having a diameter of about 300 mm.

18. (Currently Amended) The wafer boat of claim 14, wherein an angle α in the range of 10-80 degrees is defined between a first radius of the wafer extending ~~form~~ from the center of the wafer to the periphery of the wafer proximate the first upper support guides and a second radius extending vertically downward ~~form~~ from the center of the wafer to a point on the periphery of the wafer which corresponds to the center of the lower portion.

Proposed Claim Amendments:

Please amend the claims as follows:

14. (Currently Amended) A wafer boat for holding a semiconductor wafer during wafer processing at elevated temperatures, the wafer boat comprising:

a first end and a second end;

a plurality of slots positioned between the first and the second ends for receiving semiconductor wafers therein, each of the plurality of slots comprising first and second upper support guides to maintain the semiconductor wafers in a vertical orientation; and

a lower portion upon which a portion of the wafer ~~is~~ will be in contact, and which ~~supports~~ will support the wafer when the wafer is positioned thereon, the wafer boat having an inner radius originating from a centerpoint, the slots extending generally along an arc having a radius of curvature corresponding to the inner radius, wherein the lower portion ~~having~~ has a generally arcuate and concave contour as viewed from the centerpoint~~along a central axis of the wafer and an arcuate configuration which~~, and wherein at semiconductor processing temperatures of between approximately 1000 °C to 1400° C, the lower portion substantially conforms to the portion of the wafer supported thereon.

15. (Previously Presented) The wafer boat of claim 14, where the wafer boat comprises silicon carbide.

16. (Previously Presented) The wafer boat of claim 15, wherein the silicon carbide is recrystallized silicon carbide.

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18. (Currently Amended) The wafer boat of claim 14, wherein an angle α in the range of 10-80 degrees is defined between a first radius of the wafer extending ~~form~~ from the center of the wafer to the periphery of the wafer proximate the first upper support guides and a second radius extending vertically downward ~~form~~ from the center of the wafer to a point on the periphery of the wafer which corresponds to the center of the lower portion.